Bootcamp: Intensive Training on ABA and Verbal Behavior Programming for Classroom Teams

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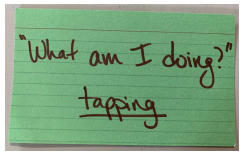
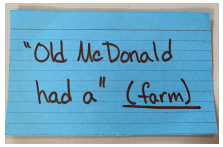
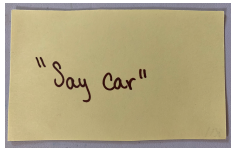
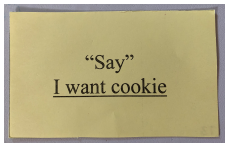
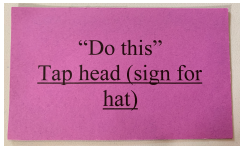
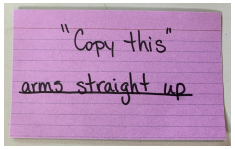
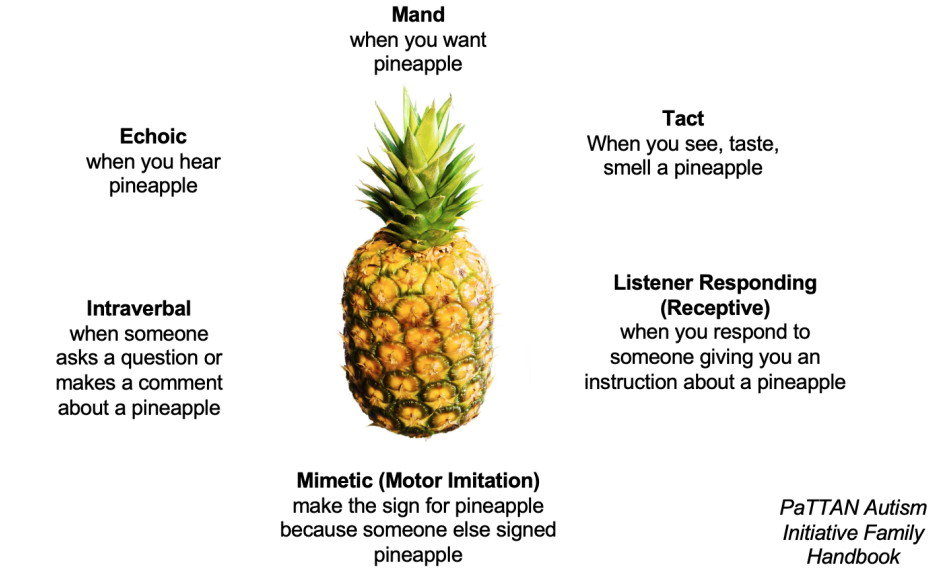
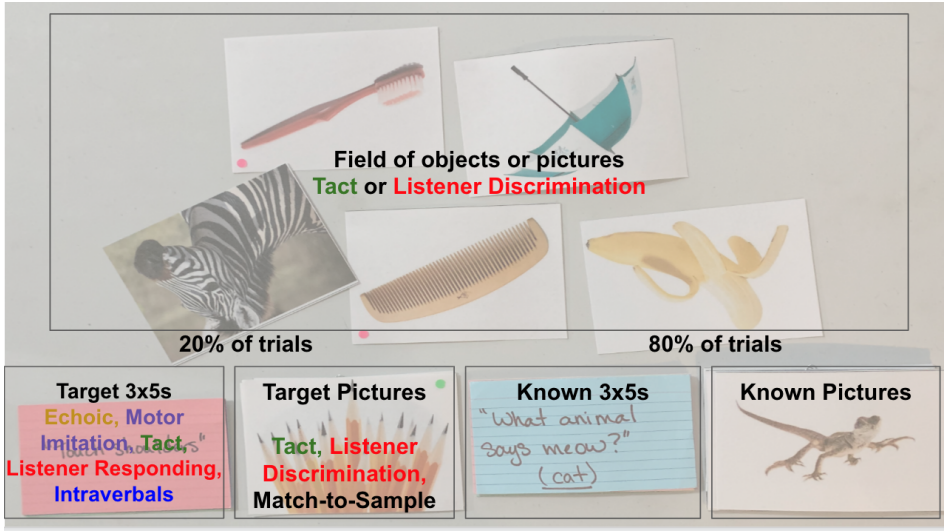
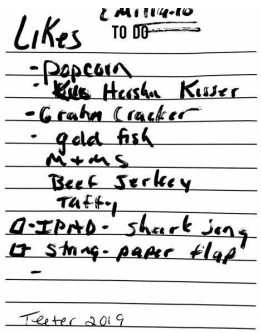
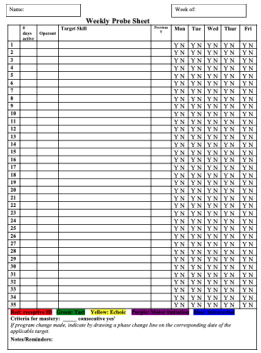
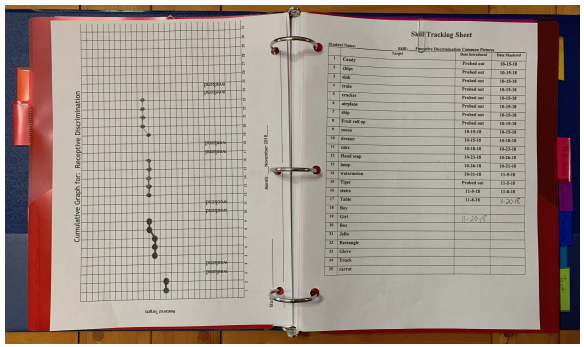
Components	Specifics	Considerations
What is ABA?	ABA stands for Applied Behavior Analysis. It is the science of studying behavior and applying *data supported techniques* to increasing or decreasing *behaviors that are meaningful* to the individual and their social environment	Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA): "The best available evidence suggests that using interventions from the field of applied behavior analysis, or ABA, will produce the best outcomes. In ABA, scientifically established principles of learning and behavior are combined to address the primary areas of concern in autism: communication, social development, learning, and behavior problems". In 2009 the National Standards Report was released, giving administrators and educators a guide for the development of intervention programs that are evidenced-based. The "report covers a broad range of applied treatments and identifies the level of scientific evidence available for each. It includes the largest number of studies ever reviewed" (National Standards Report Overview, 2009, 2015). The authors of the report conclude that one common element for most of the successful intervention programs, identified as "established treatments," was that they were based on behavior analysis (e.g., Cooper, Heron, & Heward, 2007, 2020; Skinner, 1953) (National Autism Center, National Autism Standards 2009). This report is consistent with previous research and recommendations (National Research Council (2001); NY State Dept. of Health (1999); Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities (MADSEC) (1999). Report of the MADSEC Autism Task Force. Manchester, Maine)
Principles of ABA	*Analyzes* socially significant behavior in need of improvement. This means that educators collect, examine, and interpret data as part of the teaching process. Behavior is defined in objective and measurable terms. Examines the functional relationship between behavior (what a person does) and its controlling variables (what happens in the environment). *Analyzes* behavior through a three term contingency: ● *What happens before the behavior* ● *What does the behavior look like* ● *What happens after the behavior*	
Why do we use it, and what are we trying to accomplish by using this system?	Verbal Behavior is behavior that is mediated by the behavior of another person. This means it is what we do in most of our interactions with other people. Verbal behavior is communication. It focuses attention on the functional analysis of language: looking at the conditions under which a person will use language. In other words, looking at	Verbal behavior can include speaking, using sign language, writing, gesturing, using picture exchange systems, and various augmentative communication devices. (Skinner, 1953) Click here for potential start up costs

	why things are said.	
Define Verbal Operants	Verbal Behavior is best understood by learning the verbal operants. The verbal operants are a way of classifying what is said by why it is said. **Mand =** request (you say it because you want it) **Tact =** label (you say it because you see, hear, smell, taste, or feel something) **Intraverbal =** conversation, answering a question, responding when someone else talks (you say it because someone else asked you a question or made a comment) **Echoic =** repeating what someone else says (you say it because someone else said it) **Imitation=** repeating someone else's motor movements (you move because someone else moved the same way) **Listener Responding/Receptive =** following directions (you do what someone else asks you to do)	A color coded system is used when teaching the verbal operants. Teachers will use 3x5 colored index cards, objects, and pictures to teach the verbal operants. · RED: Listener responding (receptive discrimination skills that you do not use pictures for such as, "touch your nose", "stand up", "show me laughing")   · GREEN: Tacts- Examples: "This is my nose", "what am I doing?" laughing)   · BLUE: Intraverbal skills (Fill-ins "wash your" hands "you write with a" pencil   · YELLOW: Echoic skills "say snowman"   · PURPLE: Motor Imitation skills "copy me" (adult models raising one hand)  

Teaching words across the Verbal Operants	In verbal behavior programs we focus on teaching all the meanings of a word. So one word, such as pineapple, may be used for a variety of purposes – to label, to request, to answer a question, to repeat what someone else has said, and so forth. The same word will have to be taught as a mand, a tact, an echoic, an intraverbal, or as a receptive response so that the student can use the word for a full range of purposes.	
Intensive Teaching at the table	*Sessions begin with a mand or free delivery of reinforcement. *Cards are organized and reinforcement is delivered on a variable ratio of reinforcement. *Demands are faded in and the ratio of easy tasks to hard tasks is 80/20. *Instructors teach target skills using errorless teaching procedures. *Instructors run error correction procedures when no response occurs after 2 seconds or an error was made.	

Reinforcement	**Reinforcement** increases the future probability of behavior. [Variable Ratio (VR)](#) schedule of reinforcement is when responses are reinforced on an average number of responses which leads to strong and steady responding. (Skinner, 1953; Van Houten & Nau, 1980; Clark & Sherman, 1975; Guess & Baer, 1973; Vollmer, et. al.,1999). Student's VR schedule should be posted near the IT area.	 Likes -Popcorn -Hershey Kisses -Graham Cracker -gold fish M+Ms Beef Jerkey Taffy a-IPAD- shark jaws b- string- paper flap Teeter 2019 Posting a reinforcer list in the work area is helpful for staff to know reinforcers for each student. There should be a variety to keep reinforcement unpredictable. *Reinforcers are student specific and should be varied throughout the day so they do not lose value.
Classroom Schedules are posted	The schedules indicates: *Who is working with each student. *When sessions start and end. *Where students are working *What they are working on tied to their individualized program *Minimum of 75% of intervals on the schedule are directly tied to program instruction *Time intervals are no longer than 30 minutes (depending on IEP team decisions)	

Program Book	*Each student has an individual program book. *Weekly cold probe sheets and Mand cold probe data are located at the front and filled out daily. Mastered skills are highlighted. *Mand data on frequency and acquisition are filled out daily. *Each operant is in a separate section that includes a cumulative monthly graph and skills tracking sheet that are updated daily. *VB-MAPP grids, behavior plans, and behavior data are included. *Cumulative sheets for a summary of mastered items are filled out for each operant.	 Weekly Probe Sheet- First trial data is taken daily  Monthly Graph Skills Tracking Sheet updated daily
Independent Work (IW)	Mastered skills are placed in structured work tasks, so students can work independently. Independent work tasks help with skill maintenance. Independent work is a time where the child works independently to follow a visual schedule (can be words, pictures, symbols) to complete mastered skills. It is an individual activity in which each student works on skills that he/she has mastered in OT or Intensive Teaching. The tasks for IW have a clear beginning and end and the IW session usually takes about 15 minutes.	   IW could be organized in a three-tiered drawer to teach the student where to start and where to end.

Natural Environment Teaching (NET):	Applying skills that were mastered in Intensive Teaching sessions to a more Natural Environment. Teaching the verbal operants across all environments promotes maintenance and generalization.	<u>Group Activities:</u> Daily lessons with learners of similar needs. · Individual and Choral responses are practiced. <u>Natural Environment</u>: Natural situations or settings that occur during the school day. · Phys ed class- kicking, throwing, scooting, catching · Recess- climbing, running, kicking, swinging · Transitions- walking, responding to greetings · Assemblies- sitting criss-cross, clapping, choral responding · Lunch- eating, wiping, drinking, opening · Vocational - task completion, working with others cooperatively, following directions, communicating with others, social skills
Establishing Instructional Control	Strategies are provided to reduce instructors nagging, forced physical prompts, and continuous escape blocking. The goal is to create a learning environment where escape behavior is less desirable then the reinforcing value of the teaching setting. To maximize a child's learning potential, the teaching setting needs to become the child's preference.	•High rates of reinforcement is delivered to reduce escape behavior. •Errorless instruction •Pair instruction with positive reinforcement •Fade in demands gradually (number and effort) •Fast paced instruction (short time between trials) •Mix and vary instructional demands •Choice making •Neutralizing routines by using behavior momentum, presession pairing, and dense schedules of reinforcement to make instruction less aversive to the learner. •Intersperse easy/hard tasks •Task novelty •Session duration (keep short) •Immediate delivery of reinforcement **(Carbone, 2010)**

Resource page/Sources of Research	**Websites** www.asatonline.org www.autism-society.org www.autismshop.com www.behavior.org www.difflearn.com (This is an on-line catalog specializing in learning materials and playthings for children with developmental delays and challenges) www.drcarbone.net www.marksundberg.com www.pattan.net www.vbteachingtools.com **Other** Educating Children with Autism. National Academy Press: Washington, D.C. The Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills (ABLLS): An Assessment, Curriculum Guide, and Tracking System for Children with Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities. Sundberg, M.L., & Partington, J.W. (1998). Danville, CA: Behavior Analysts, Inc. The Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, http://seab.envmed.rochester.edu/jaba/ Journal of Applied Verbal Behavior. Partington, J.W. & Bailey, J.S. (1993), 11, 9-18 Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities (1999). Report of the MADSEC Autism Task Force. MADSEC: Manchester, Maine Mand training within the Pennsylvania Verbal Behavior Project: a training manual (2009), Miklos, M. & Dipuglia, A. Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network: Harrisburg, PA. National Autism Center: National Autism Standards (2009 & 2015) Randolph, Massachusetts National Research Council (2001). NY State Dept. of Health (1999). Clinical Practice Guideline, Technical Report, Autism/Pervasive Developmental Disorders, NYS Department of Health, Early Intervention Program: Albany, N.Y. Teaching Language to Children with Autism or Other Developmental Disabilities. Sundberg, M.L. & Partington, J.W. (1998). Danville, CA: Behavior Analysts, Inc. The Pennsylvania Verbal Behavior Project intensive teaching of the verbal operants: a beginning guide (2007). Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network. Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance training manual. The Verbal Behavior Approach: How to Teach Children with Autism and Related Disorders, Barbera, M.L.& Rasmussen, T. (2007) London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers Verbal Behavior. Skinner, B.F. (1957) New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts. Verbal Behavior Analysis, Greer, D. & Ross, D. (2007) Boston, MA: Pierson Publishing

TASN Autism and Tertiary Behavior Supports is funded through Part B funds administered by the Kansas State Department of Education's Early Childhood, Special Education and Title Services. TASN Autism and Tertiary Behavior Supports does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Deputy Director, Keystone Learning Services, 500 E. Sunflower, Ozawkie, KS 66070, 785-876-2214.
Revised: 3/16/20